

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

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44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 OFA-01

OES-05 DLOS-04 SAL-01 IO-11 CG-00 DOTE-00 ACDA-10

OMB-01 SAJ-01 /103 W

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P R 271530Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5990

INFO COMICEDEFOR

CINCLANT

CNO WASHDC

SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

UNCLAS REYKJAVIK 0120

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIS PFOR IC UK

SUBJECT: ICELAND-UK FISHERIES DISPUTE: NEW TRAWL CUTTING

1. ICELANDIC COAST GUARD'S CUTTING OF TRAWL WIRES FROM BRITISH FISHING BOAT YESTERDAY IS BEING EXAMINED HERE FOR POSSIBLE IMPACT ON PRIME MINISTERIAL FISHERIES DISCUSSIONS CONCLUDING TODAY IN LONDON. AS USUAL, COMMENTS REFLECT POLITICAL PREJUDICES COMBINED WITH ATTITUDE TOWARD FISHERIES DISPUTE GENERALLY AND LONDON MEETING IN PARTICULAR.

2. INCIDENT OCCURRED ABOUT 1330 JANUARY 26 SOME 44 MILES FROM COAST AND WAS FIRST CLIPPING SINCE UK WARSHIPS PULLED OUT OF UNCLASSIFIED

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DISPUTED WATERS WEEK AGO. GOI HAD BEEN UNDER FIRE FROM FISHERIES

HARD-LINERS FOR FAILURE TO ACT AGAINST BRITISH "POACHERS" DESPITE
PLEDGE TO ENFORCE LAW IN CLAIMED FISHING JURISDICTION.

3. PROGRESSIVE PARTY CHAIRMAN AND JUSTICE MINISTER OLAFUR
JOHANNESSON (WHOSE MINISTRY INCLUDES COAST GUARD) TOLD PRESS
THAT LATEST CUTTING WAS CARRIED OUT WITH HIS FULL APPROVAL.
ASKED IF INCIDENT WOULD DAMAGE POSITION OF PRIMEMIN IN LONDON
TALKS, JOHANNESSON, WHO HAS ASSUMED TOUGH STAND ON "ILLEGAL"
UK FISHING (REYKJAVIK 114), SAID OPPOSITE WOULD BE CASE. HE
REFERRED TO REUTERS REPORTS THAT, AS RESULT OF CLIPPING, HMG
HAD URGED TRAWLERS TO STOP FISHING AND SAID TRAWL-CUTTING APPEARED
TO HAVE HAD DESIRED RESULTS. CONSEQUENTLY, JOHANNESSON SAID,
HAND OF GOI NEGOTIATORS WOULD BE STRENGTHENED.

4. INDEPENDENCE PARTY'S MAIN DAILY MORGUNBLADID, ON OTHER HAND,
STRESSED THIS MORNING IN REPORT FROM LONDON THAT TRAWL-CUTTING
HAD RECEIVED CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION IN BRITISH MEDIA AND ADDED
THAT INCIDENT HAD "NOT INCREASED SYMPATHY" FOR ICELAND'S
CAUSE OCCURRING, AS IT DID, WHILE PRIME MINISTERS WERE MEETING.
PEOPLES ALLIANCE DAILY THJODVILJINN WELCOMED YESTERDAY'S
INCIDENT ON FRONT PAGE AND IN EDITORIAL. THJODVILJINN SAID TIMING
OF CLIPPING WAS ESPECIALLY AUSPICIOUS AND HOPEFULLY WOULD HINDER
REACHING OF CONCESSIONARY AGREEMENT IN LONDON.

5. CONCERNING DETAILS OF LONDON TALKS THEMSELVES, NO SUBSTANTIVE
INFORMATION HAS FILTERED OUT LOCALLY. MEDIA HAS NOTED THAT
NEGOTIATORS HAVE KEPT TIGHT LID ON DISCUSSIONS, AND MOST ICELANDIC
COVERAGE OF MEETINGS HAS BEEN BASED ON BRITISH PRESS SPECULATION.
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